



United States Department of the Interior

FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE

5275 Leesburg Pike, MS: IRTM
Falls Church, VA 22041



IN REPLY REFER TO:
FWS-2019-00540

June 25, 2019

Sent via Email: 70598-60944669@requests.muckrock.com

Ms. Beryl Lipton
Muck Rock News
DEPT 70598
411A Highland Avenue
Somerville, MA 02144-2516

Dear Ms. Lipton:

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS) FOIA office received your Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) request, dated March 15, 2019 and assigned it control number FWS-2019-00540. Please cite this number in any future communications with our office regarding your request. You requested the following:

“...materials related to the funding, staffing, and activities of this FOIA office:

Budget materials for the years 2017, 2018, and 2019, all budget materials or plans applicable to offices responsible for processing and response to FOIA requests and appeals submitted to this Bureau and its offices.

Staffing orders/reports/contact for the years 2017 and 2018, staffing reports and plans, including the count of employee numbers and for offices responsible for processing and responses to FOIA requests and appeals submitted to this Bureau and its offices. If this report is available in a form that includes the total number of hours worked for FOIA personnel, that version would be preferred. If reports are available for each month, that version is preferred.

According to this agency's "About Us" website (<https://www.doi.gov/foia/About-Us>): "The Department has decentralized its FOIA operations among 13 bureaus and offices, each of which has a Bureau/Office FOIA Officer leading its separately managed and resourced FOIA Program. Secretarial Order 3244 (November 12, 2002) anchored Bureau/Office FOIA Offices within their respective CIOs' Offices. That order was superseded by Secretarial Order 3309 (December 14, 2010), which replaced Bureau/Office CIOs with Assistant Directors for Information Resources and initiated a series of significant ongoing organizational changes as part of the Department's IT Transformation.

Bureau/office FOIA Officers are responsible for tracking, managing and responding to FOIA requests for records in their organization's possession and control, and administering their organization's FOIA programs. In addition to Bureau/Office FOIA Officers, some bureaus/offices also have Regional FOIA Coordinators and Field Offices that process requests. Some bureaus/offices have their program offices (i.e., the offices whose records are the subject of the requests) prepare the responses to FOIA requests. These responses are reviewed by the FOIA Officer or Regional FOIA Coordinator and the appropriate FOIA attorney (when the decision is to withhold information, make a discretionary release, or deny a fee waiver).”

All staffing reports and plans for the year 2019;

If reports are available for each month, such a version is preferred.

Contact information, including email addresses and phone numbers (if available), for each FOIA officer currently tasked with an open public records request

FOIA requester categories for the years 2017 and 2018, the designated category of each requester of a FOIA request to this office, including those assigned to the following categories:

- * commercial;*
- * educational and noncommercial scientific institutions;*
- * representative of news media requester;*
- * all other requesters*

If this information is kept in an aggregate form including the number of requesters by fee category by year, a copy of this report will suffice to fulfill this element of the request.

FOIA fee waivers for the years 2017 and 2018, the number of fee waivers granted by this office and, if available, the tracking numbers for the FOIA requests to which waivers were granted.

FOIA fee collection for the years 2017 and 2018, any report capturing the following information:

- * total estimated processing and copy fees quoted to FOIA requesters*
- * total processing and copy fees collected by this Bureau from each fee category*

If this information is kept in an aggregate form, such as a FOIA log, that material would be sufficient to satisfy the bullet points “FOIA requester categories” and “FOIA fee collection” if it captures the following information:

- * FOIA tracking number*
- * requester fee category*

- * *amount processing and copy fees associated with the request*
- * *the status of the requester's payment for the request*

FOIA Policy Staff audit reports or summaries for the years 2017 and 2018, any and all reports of self-assessments conducted by FOIA Policy Staff.

According to the U.S. Department of the Interior 2018 Chief FOIA Officer Report, "Department FOIA Policy Staff regularly conduct self- assessments of the Department's FOIA program, by reviewing Annual Report data, conducting audits of each bureau at least bi-annually, and reviewing and updating processing procedures, including its FOIA regulations."

Response

Today we are writing to respond to your request. The information you are seeking can be found in the DOI FOIA Annual Reports. Another tool you might find useful is the FWS FOIA Reading Room Log. Both of these items are publicly available at the following websites:

<https://www.doi.gov/foia/DOI-FOIA-Annual-Reports> - Annual Reports

<https://www.fws.gov/irm/bpim/foiaread.html>. – FOIA Log

Fees

We do not bill requesters for FOIA processing fees when their fees are less than \$50.00, because the cost of collection would be greater than the fee collected. See [43 C.F.R. § 2.37\(g\)](#). Therefore, there is no billable fee for the processing of this request.

FOIA Public Liaison

You may seek dispute resolution services from our FOIA Public Liaison, Cathy Willis at (703) 485-5173.

Mediation Services

The 2007 FOIA amendments created the Office of Government Information Services (OGIS) to offer mediation services to resolve disputes between FOIA requesters and Federal agencies as a non- exclusive alternative to litigation. Using OGIS services does not affect your right to pursue litigation. You may contact OGIS in any of the following ways:

Office of Government Information Services
National Archives and Records Administration
8601 Adelphi Road - OGIS
College Park, MD 20740-6001

E-mail: ogis@nara.gov
Web: <https://ogis.archives.gov>
Telephone: 202-741-5770
Fax: 202-741-5769
Toll-free: 1-877-684-6448

Conclusion

For your information, Congress excluded three discrete categories of law enforcement and national security records from the requirements of FOIA. *See* [5 U.S.C. 552\(c\)](#). This response is limited to those records that are subject to the requirements of FOIA. This is a standard notification that is given to all our requesters and should not be taken as an indication that excluded records do, or do not, exist

If you have any questions about our response to your request, you may contact Pam Mozina by phone at 703-358-2698 by email at pamela_mozina@fws.gov, or by mail at, Fish and Wildlife Service, 5275 Leesburg Pike, MS: IRTM, Falls Church, VA 22041.

Sincerely,

For Cathy Willis
FWS FOIA Officer